

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

HONORING THE LIFE AND SERVICE OF WILLIAM "BILL" SMETHERS

HON. ZOE LOFGREN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 5, 2017

Ms. LOFGREN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and honor the life of William "Bill" Smethers, who passed away on March 31, 2017. Bill was a wonderful friend and beloved member of our community whose passing is deeply felt. Having known and worked with Bill, I know that he will be greatly missed. He touched many lives throughout his decades of service to our community.

As a former Santa Clara County Fair Manager, Bill fought to protect the County Fair from being eliminated and continued to advocate for improving the Fair well after leaving his post as manager. His steadfast dedication became an inspiration for others to follow, encouraging them to preserve and continue these Fairs, festivals, and other cultural institutions not only in Santa Clara County but across California.

Most importantly, Bill founded Youth Focus Inc. almost 50 years ago to empower and motivate youth, providing learning opportunities for youth to excel and become future leaders in our community. Through various cultural and educational enrichment programs, Bill and his team at Youth Focus Inc. made a tremendous impact on countless young people by helping them develop skills they needed to become productive and contributing members of our society. His work has left a lasting impression on those who participated in Youth Focus Inc. programs and will continue to be felt by future generations.

Mr. Speaker, our San Jose community mourns the passing of Bill Smethers as we honor his life today. We thank him for his lasting contributions to our community and join his loved ones in celebrating his incredible life.

REINA BAUTISTA

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 5, 2017

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Reina Bautista for receiving the Adams County Mayors and Commissioners Youth Award.

Reina Bautista is a 10th grader at Eagle Ridge Academy and received this award because her determination and hard work have allowed her to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Reina Bautista is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Reina Bautista for winning the Adams County Mayors and Commissioners Youth Award. I have no doubt she will exhibit the same dedication and character in all of her future accomplishments.

TRIBUTE TO THE LATE CHUCK BERRY, THE FATHER OF ROCK N' ROLL

HON. WM. LACY CLAY

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 5, 2017

Mr. CLAY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a legendary American musical genius;

An inaugural member of the Rock n' Roll Hall of Fame;

And a former neighbor and friend of the Clay family for six decades . . .

The father of Rock n' Roll; the immortal Chuck Berry.

Mr. Berry, a legendary singer, songwriter and guitarist who created the original American art form that would come to be known as Rock n' Roll, died on March 18 at the age of 90.

He began singing in the Antioch Baptist Church choir in St. Louis when he was just six years old.

In 1952, when jazz pianist Johnnie Johnson lost his saxophonist, Alvin Bennett, to a stroke on Christmas Eve, he called on Mr. Berry to join the Sir John Trio.

The group played at the famed Cosmopolitan Club in East St. Louis. Although he was a new guitarist, Mr. Berry added vocals and showmanship to the group and was soon its leader.

During a 1955 visit to Chicago, legendary Blues man Muddy Waters suggested that Berry should reach out to Leonard Chess at Chess Records.

Mr. Berry sent him four demos; one was his iconic single . . . Maybellene. He got the contract.

The high-octane Maybellene became his first hit single.

As the civil rights movement was awakening the nation to the struggle for justice and equality for African Americans, Chuck Berry's music smashed the color barrier. He was one of the first Black artists to become as popular with white audiences as he was with Black audiences.

In 1958, he did an ode to teenage-hood: Sweet Little Sixteen. It grabbed the No. 1 spot on the R&B chart and No. 2 on the pop chart.

Then came Johnny B. Goode, his anthem that was part autobiography, part tribute to his piano player, Johnny Johnson. It's about a poor country boy with a gift for playing the guitar and dreams of someday seeing his name up in lights "saying Johnny B. Goode tonight."

In 1987, his self-titled autobiography was published and the enduring documentary film about his life, Hail! Hail! Rock n' Roll, was released.

Mr. Berry appeared as himself in the 1978 film, American Hot Wax, and performed at the Carter White House in 1979.

A career that transcended hate and racism, and outlasted hardship, began winning long-overdue recognition in the '80s.

In 1985, he received the Grammy Lifetime Achievement Award and was inducted into the Blues Foundation's Blues Hall of Fame.

In 1986, after more than 40 years in show business, Chuck Berry was inducted into the Rock n' Roll Hall of Fame as a member of its inaugural class.

Two years later, Chuck Berry received his star on St. Louis' Walk of Fame.

In 2011 . . . a larger than life statue of Mr. Berry was installed near his star, across the street from the world-famous Blueberry Hill on Delmar Boulevard in the heart of my Congressional District.

The Beatles, The Rolling Stones and many other world-class groups owe their success to the innovative genius of Chuck Berry.

Mr. Berry's most recent award, the Polar Music Prize, aptly stated: "Every riff and solo played by rock guitarists over the last 60 years contains DNA that can be traced right back to Chuck Berry."

Charles Edward Anderson Berry was born Oct. 18, 1926 in St. Louis' historic Ville neighborhood. He was the fourth of Martha Bell Banks Berry and Henry William Berry Sr.'s six children.

Mr. Berry is survived by his wife, Themetta, and his four children, Ingrid Berry, Melody Eskridge, Aloha Isa Leigh Berry and Charles Berry Jr.

On behalf of the Clay family, I want to express our deepest condolences to our old friends . . . the Berry family.

And on behalf of music fans everywhere, I want to give thanks for the life of this legendary artist . . . whose legacy and unique sound will live on for generations to come.

A true St. Louis legend and an American treasure . . . Chuck Berry.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. PETER J. VISCLOSKY

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 5, 2017

Mr. VISCLOSKY. Mr. Speaker, on April 3, 2017, and April 4, 2017, I was absent from the House and missed Roll Call Votes 209 through 216.

Had I been present for Roll Call Vote 209, on passage of H. Res. 92, I would have voted Yes.

Had I been present for Roll Call Vote 210, on passage of H.R. 479, I would have voted Yes.

Had I been present for Roll Call Vote 211, on ordering the previous question, I would have voted No.

Had I been present for Roll Call Vote 212, on agreeing to H. Res. 241, I would have voted No.

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.